

***BUMPER – Ugly World

<Temptations Title>

This world is messed up... I know that there are pretty sights in this world... We have songs that celebrate purple mountains majesty & beautiful for spacious skies... But this world actually offers the ugliest sights in the galaxy.

Spousal abuse, war, genocide, disease, atomic warfare, greed, hatred, racism, the internal revenue system... This world is the ugliest place in the galaxy.

We can, as the song declares, “think to ourselves... what a wonderful world.” But we know better...

We often go back to this... it is worth repeating...

God created this world and he created it good. It was a wonderful world with God and Man & Woman...

All the beauty of that world changed when temptation was brought to Man & Woman... Satan brought that temptation to us... This beautiful World was contaminated... Contaminated by Sin

<1 Temptation>, to take the fruit from the tree of knowledge and eat it, led to <1 Sin>...

This was all it took to ruin this beautiful world. This 1 temptation & 1 sin did more than bring a slight impurity to the world... it did more than bring a slight dirty stain in the corner of the picture...

This one sin overtook the world...

7 Generations after this singular sin is introduced... The world is so sinful that God decides the only way to save this World is to start over... The world is so entangled in sin there was no other natural way to untangle it... So 687 years after the creation of this world it is prophesied that God will destroy the Earth. That prophesy oddly enough came through the birth of a child... Methusalah who's name means “When he dies judgement shall be sent.”

Methusalah lived 969 years, longer than any other human ever... and then the flood came and only Noah and his family were saved.

The world was so entangled in sin that there was no natural way out...

Do you relate to the idea of sin being an entanglement? Have you ever tried to free yourself from sin? Have you ever said to yourself... “ok self... no more doing that... that thing that is bad... no more... uh oh... I'm doing it again...”

I remember being a young teenage Christian... I remember the feeling that everywhere I looked was an opportunity to sin. It was overwhelming. I was trying to abstain from sin... but if I looked over here...

I eventually said ok... I'm just going to sit here with my thoughts... but sin crept into my thoughts...

I felt like sin was this impossible thing to get away from... It was too strong... it would always overwhelm... it was always waiting...

God describes sin like this... **Genesis 4:7 (NIV) ... sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you...**

This sermon series is here to simplify something about sin... Sin although it feels like a complicated entanglement is actually very simple...

Would you like it if you left this place with an advantage over temptation and sin? Wouldn't it be great to learn that sin isn't all powerful... Sometimes it feels like everything you want to do is a sin... wouldn't it be great to know that is not true...

1 John 2:16 (NIV) For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world.

This big bad world that is full of sin that seems impossible to live in... There are just TOO MANY TEMPTATIONS in this world... I should probably live alone on a mountain like a monk... to avoid all these temptations...

How many temptations do you see in 1 John 2:16?

1 The cravings of sinful man. 2 The lust of his eyes. 3 the boasting of what he has and does.

That's only 3 things... This sinful world has only 3 things it can throw at you...

It feels like it has 1 million things that it could tempt us with... but don't be deceived... it's really on 3 things...

I can't speak for you, but let me say it for me... I don't know if I can take a barrage of a million sins being thrown at me every day... BUT... I might could handle 3... If I learnt what those 3 sin temptations were... If I could recognize them and new how to combat them... That, with God's help, I believe I could manage...

We are going to refer to these three temptations as it is written in the King James Bible..

1 John 2: 16 (NKJV) the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life

These are the only things this world can attack you with. The biggest baddest demon in hell can only attack you with these 3 things. There is nothing else that can possibly come at you but these 3 things...

In the Garden of Eden... **Genesis 3:6 (NIV) ..She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it.**

Beautiful Tree – Lust of the eyes, Looked Delicious – Lust of the Flesh, Wanted wisdom – Pride of Life...

When Jesus is tempted in the wilderness... Matthew 11:2-3 (NIV) ²After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." LUST OF THE FLESH

Matthew 11:5-6 (NIV) Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶"If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written:

"He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."¹⁰ PRIDE OF LIFE

Matthew 11:8-9 (NIV) Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹"All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." LUST OF THE EYES

Eve didn't do so well against the 3 temptations... But Jesus beat the Devil! With His help the enemy and his schemes are beatable.

<Lust of the Flesh>

What is Lust? An overwhelming desire or craving. If you ever expressed a strong want or desire... you could call that a lust. It's used in a negative context because lust doesn't stop bothering you until it gets what it wants...

What is flesh? Flesh is physical... It is what is experienced in this human realm.

So Lust of the Flesh is a strong desire to experience and feel physical things...

<Me mentality>

Think about all of those LAME superbowl adds this year. They were trying to get you to... think about yourself in a brand new truck... think about you drinking a Budweiser whilst surrounded by all your new friends because you are popular... think that you are your guy could be as sexy as that Calvin Klein model if we just bought the right brand of underwear...

It's you you you... me me me...

And the motive of the people who made those commercials... I don't care what manipulation or flat out lie I have to tell... ME WANT MONEY...

That is the Lust of Flesh... Always ME FIRST...

When you start desiring food do any of us say... stop stop... wait a minute... Let us stop and think about the less fortunate who don't have food on their tables... NOOOO... We think what am I going to eat...

Lust never thinks about others... LOVE THINKS ABOUT OTHERS! Lust is not Love!

When we see that car commercial we don't stop and think... How blessed are we to have a working car... we are in a two car family and that is such a blessing and convenience.. we are thankful for what we have... You know we know someone who doesn't have a car and needs one... perhaps we should help them get a reliable used car...?

NO! The strength of today's advertising is that it capitalizes on our fallen nature and our lust for the physical. There is nothing redemptive in this.

The first thing we think of when we hear the phrase LUST OF THE FLESH is... sex.. But it's not just sex. We are going to talk about sex in a few minutes but first let's point out some things non-sexual.

The feeling you get from Food

The feeling you get from an Addiction – Alcohol or drugs

The feeling you get from being entertained – Movies, video games

The feeling you get Luxury

The feeling you get from Thrill Seeking

The physical things you will do to achieve an Emotional feeling..

Some people feel powerful when they express their anger...

These things are all temptations of the Flesh. NOW LET'S BE CLEAR!!

Enjoying food is not a sin... Wanting to experience a good hamburger isn't sin... In fact god gave us taste buds to enjoy food... It's logical to say God wants us to enjoy food... (O taste and see that the lord is good)

However, **Good things become Bad things when they are elevated as GOD things.** If you put too much focus on anything and place it at a place of importance above God... It immediately becomes a sin.

God is the source of Life... not these physical things... There is no Life in these things... When we feed off the Lusts of the Flesh... It doesn't sustain us at all... We try to get life from things that have no life within them... That is the lust of the flesh.

Let's talk about **<SEX>**

Let me start with an apology. Sex is a topic that we have rarely discussed at Redemption, yet it is an issue that the whole world is dealing with. We are

going to be talking about this subject as much as you need us to talk about this subject...

This culture we live in is not ashamed to talk about sex.

Instead of hearing about the subject in church from a God context we have forced people to learn their view on sexuality outside the confines of church. This isn't good. So let's be brave enough to change that.

You need not be ashamed or embarrassed to ask. If you feel uneasy about asking you can always write an anonymous note and drop it in the offering baskets. We want you to feel safe in asking. We are willing to help you with your questions.

God gives us good things to enjoy and sex is one of those things.

Religion has mostly gotten this wrong. There are sects of Christianity that will tell you that sex is meant to be only functional as a means to have children. They say that if you engage in sex for reasons such as pleasure you are wrong.

RELIGION RUINS EVERYTHING. Religious thinking like this has heaped tons of guilt onto people for enjoying something that God gave them to enjoy.

It is God's will that sex is enjoyable. He made it that way.

It is in lusting after sex... the overwhelming craving... If a "me mentality" starts telling the flesh what to do in the area of sex it will lead quickly to sin. It will take what should be about love and make it about self.

This is an important question and I feel lead to tackle it...

<Is it realistic to abstain from sex before marriage?>

What if I have sex for love and not lust? Sure the Bible tells us not to... but there are a lot of rules in the bible we don't keep anymore... Why keep this one...

We live in a different culture today than they did then... it's not realistic in this culture...

This is just religion trying to make me feel guilty again...

The Bible clearly tells us that **LOVE IS PATIENT**. If what you are feeling refuses to wait... It isn't love... it's lust... **LOVE IS PATIENT**.

Sex in the confines of marriage... that is for love... sex that won't wait for marriage isn't love.. That isn't a love motive but a ME MENTALITY

It is true that some rules in the old testament aren't followed by us today. Such as I had bacon for breakfast, I'm wearing clothes made of multiple fabrics, We are having church today on Sunday and not Saturday... on and on... But let me tell you something that will always apply to God's plan for us.

COVENANT

The word appears 321 times in the 66 books that make up the bible. In fact, our old & new testament could also be called old & new covenant. A covenant is a promise between 2 people. It is a promise that should never be broken.

God had a covenant with Adam... God said I'll provide for you and you Adam be obedient and tend to the Garden... This covenant stood until someone broke covenant... Adam broke his promise.

The Rainbow is a covenant with us that God won't destroy the world again by flood.

The 10 commandments are a covenant...

JESUS is our Covenant with God. God has made a promise to us for salvation... We make a promise to God to obey and follow...

COVENANT IS A PROMISE.

The level of intimacy that comes in sex is only safe within covenant.

The Marriage covenant says... No matter what... for better or worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health...

Covenant says "regardless of how I feel about you tomorrow I'm still going to be there for you... I'm still going to love you..."

Lust of the Flesh is the antithesis of Covenant

A Covenant is Unconditional... Lust is very conditional.

Covenant loves the other person and honors them. Lust uses the other person and discards them after they are done receiving their pleasure.

<LUST & COVENANT>

Lust of the flesh says....

I will dishonor the promise to receive the pleasure.

I don't care what I have to do, say, who I have to hurt or manipulate... I will get MY PLEASURE... get what I want.

Covenant isn't like that. I will receive displeasure to honor the promise.

I don't care what DISPLEASURE I have to go through... I will remain committed to my promise, I will be faithful to you.

The level of intimacy that comes in sex is only safe within covenant.

Lust places all the priority on the pleasure. Covenant places all priority on the promise. WHO DO YOU WANT TO BUILD A LIFE WITH... LUST OR COVENANT?

Marriage is not a government certificate we file at the courthouse... It's a covenant! A promise.

DO NOT BE INTIMATE WITH SOMEONE WHO ISN'T WILLING TO MAKE A COVENANT PROMISE WITH YOU... AND KEEP THAT PROMISE!

<PORNOGRAPHY>

The average age of first internet porn exposure – 11 years old

30% of all web traffic is pornography

One report from covenant eyes says - 20% of women and 50% of men are allegedly addicted to pornography. WHAT'S MORE SHOCKING IS THAT STUDY WAS DONE IN THE CHURCH... 20% & 50% of Church going Christians...

This is a problem... the problem is the Lust of the Flesh.

If you are addicted to pornography we want to challenge you to repent. You can start your path of freedom today. Don't go past this moment in the altar without making a change.

<How can I be free?>

That 1 sin took over the entire world. There was no Natural answer for Sin...

We have some natural suggestions for you today... but they aren't really answers...

Some Natural suggestions would be...

Seek help, expose the temptation and build accountability, if you have trouble with porn perhaps you shouldn't be alone with your computer...

It's ok to RUN AWAY... Every other place in your Bible it tells you to stand your ground, stand still and see the salvation of God, to hold fast, to stand against the enemy, to be like a tree planted by waters of life – unmovable... BUT WHEN IT COMES TO LUST... The Bible says RUN AWAY!

1 Corinthians 6:18 (NIV) Flee from sexual immorality...

2 Timothy 2:2 (NLT) Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts.

Recognize Lust and run. Recognize that ME MENTALITY. Recognize your impure motives...

That ME MENTALITY always makes it about you... Make it about others... Make it about Jesus..

- **Musician**

That 1 sin took over the entire world. There was no Natural answer for Sin... Jesus is our supernatural answer for sin.

Colossians 2:13-14 (NIV) ...He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us...

HE FORGAVE ALL OUR SINS All the shame of sin – forgiven. All of it. He knew it all and He forgave it all..

HE CANCELED THE WRITTEN CODE WITH IT'S REGULATIONS... Every rule you broke, every sin you committed brought a charge against you.

Jerry Sandusky the convicted child abuser faced 52 counts of abuse in court. 52... I remember hearing that number. In order to remain a free man he would need to sway a courtroom that he was innocent of all 52 charges. He was found guilty on 45 counts... He will be in prison the rest of his life.

That got me thinking... What if you or I were in court... what if every wrong we had ever done was brought against us. It would be a lot more than 52 right? The times we lied, the times we stole, the times we cursed, the times we lusted, the times our thoughts were terribly wrong, the times we hated in our hearts...

All the counts of sin against us... can you imagine all the counts against you...

Even more you know you are guilty of EVERY COUNT! There is no way we are going to be able to sway God's courtroom that we are innocent of every count...

But He forgave us all our sin... HAVING CANCELED THE WRITTEN CODE WITH ITS REGULATIONS...

A voice rings out... All counts have been dropped you are free to go... The law that was against us... that stood to oppose us is gone... Where did it go?

Colossians 2:14 (NIV) ...he [JESUS] took it away, nailing it to the cross.

Jesus has taken your sin and nailed it to His Cross...

When you come to this altar today you may be coming with guilt... We are all sinners after all. Even if you have no struggles with lust, there is some temptation you are dealing with. Will you let Jesus take your sin away and nail it to His cross?